

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please delete the Abstract in its entirety and replace it with the new Abstract as following:

--A demineralized bone matrix (DBM) or other matrix composition is provided that has been stabilized by lowering the pH of the composition, reducing the water content, adding water substitutes, and/or increasing the amount of deuterated water present in the composition in order to reduce the activity of endogenous degrading enzymes such as proteases. A hydrated form of a stabilized DBM composition may be stable up to a year at room temperature at acidic pH. The acidified DBM compositions may be further stabilized by the addition of a stabilizing agent such as deuterated water, water substitutes, polymers, protease inhibitors, glycerol or hydrogels. --